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BOOK REVIEWS

METHODS AND PRINCIPLES

Men of the Old Stone Age: Their Environment, Life and Art. HENRY FAIRFIELD OSBORN. Charles Scribner's Sons: New York, 1915. Pp. 1 to 545; 8 plates, 268 text figures, and 1 map.

It is doubtful whether any field of scientific investigation has proved itself more attractive, both to the amateur and to the trained investigator, than that including the origin and early history of the human family. Within the last decade both scientific and popular magazines of Europe have contained very many interesting, in fact startling, statements concerning recent discoveries in this field of research, but for reasons not clearly understood comparatively little on this subject has come to the general reading public of this country through our own literature. The fact that early events in human history appear to have been staged on a theatre distantly removed from America seems not sufficient to account for our failure to be interested when other aspects of history receive our closest attention. Coming at this particular time of need, Professor Osborn's most admirable presentation of the subject takes an important place in the literature of modern science available to readers with interests ranging from general history, through archeology, geology, paleontology, and all aspects of the problem of anthropology.

The story told in *Men of the Old Stone Age* had its origin in Professor Osborn's personal impressions received on a journey through the regions occupied by early homes of the people of the stone age. It had its first presentation as the Hitchcock Lectures at the University of California before a large and interested audience representing all phases of university life. The interest shown by students and faculty in this course of lectures, and the avidity with which the published volume has been brought into use by university classes, show not only that the subject is one of fundamental interest for all, but that Professor Osborn's presentation and organization of the material have given a most fascinating picture of this phase of early history.

Viewed in the light of modern science, the problem of early man is not limited to sequence of cultural and biological changes, but must include an interpretation of the environment in which the human type developed.

Many aspects of the whole problem have been considered in a wide range of publications stretching over more than half a century of important research. In certain works the emphasis has naturally been placed upon cultural development, in others upon biologic change or evolution. In an unfortunately large proportion of publications of the first group the ultimate scientific value is much reduced by insufficiency of the data required in determining chronologic succession. In the second group inadequate information as to the nature of evolutionary or paleontologic series in other mammalian groups has often diminished the value of investigations centered upon man alone. In approaching the discussion of men of the Old Stone Age, Professor Osborn frankly confesses that he is not an archeologist, and that for materials representing this phase of the study, he has drawn upon the most eminent authorities, among whom are Hugo Obermaier and Henri Breuil. The geologic succession, especially in its relation to demarcation and the length of the climatic stages, has been based to a considerable extent upon the work of Albrecht Penck, Edward Brückner, and James Geikie.

Very important features of Professor Osborn's book are the exceptionally good foundations for judgment concerning the all-important matters of chronology, and of comparative or historical sequence in skeletal characters. Professor Osborn's broadly founded and widely applied knowledge of the history of mammalian faunas of the Northern Hemisphere in Pleistocene time has given the best available basis for interpretation of chronology and for correlation in study of both cultural and biologic stages. His knowledge of the mammalian paleontologic succession, based upon extended research, has furnished an unusually good foundation for judgment as to value of characters in the human evolution series.

In the opinion of the reviewer, Professor Osborn's book shows an exceptionally good balance of the geologic, paleontologic, and archeologic aspects of the problem. The natural tendency of writers in early stages of development of this subject has been to emphasize special phases, and the value of much important literature has been considerably reduced by failure to correlate the data obtained with that from other fields. We are still far from the stage at which we may assume to put into their true relations to each other the materials representing all aspects of the subject from all geographic stations and from all geologic stages, but great advances have been made in the simplification and interpretation of these records. Professor Osborn's book well represents the present development of the most advanced research, both with reference to

extent of material and to correlation and simplification of the essential or significant facts.

With reference to detail of the text of Professor Osborn's book, the author is to be complimented on such excellent organization of the material that it reads as a connected story, and is at the same time most useful for reference on the whole subject of early man.

Concerning the consecutive items of the story of man as set forth in this volume, and especially regarding those parts relating to the least satisfactorily known materials, the writer desires only to express the conviction that the author's views reflect most satisfactorily the trend of thought among investigators most closely in touch with the problems involved. Where vital differences of opinion exist the evidence is presented in such form that the facts are all available. Nothing is more true than that many items in the story of early man are not as yet interpreted to our satisfaction. The book is yet to be published in which every detail satisfies every measurement, but every book is judged on the merit of its contribution or organization of materials needed for the thought of investigators, students, and general readers. Though certain of the materials used by Professor Osborn may be modified to some extent by continued research, the method of treatment and the nature of organization of the subject are such that the book may well continue for a long period as a standard for reference concerning the development of this aspect of scientific work up to the present time.

To the student, either professional or amateur, it must always be true that a word picture, no matter how skilfully executed, can never completely replace the actual visualization of natural objects described. In this respect too great praise cannot be bestowed upon Professor Osborn's volume for the nature, arrangement, and exceptional clearness of the illustrative materials. Maps giving the location of important stations and illustrating changes in geologic history, diagrams showing cross-sections of significant deposits, careful drawings representing important skeletal materials, reconstructions of typical representatives of various faunal stages, and numerous reproductions illustrating the implements and art of primitive man have all contributed to make the perusal of this volume the nearest approach to a journey through the land of Men of the Old Stone Age, and through the museums in which the most interesting remains are now preserved. The book has also been provided with numerous tabulations and diagrams representing sequence of faunas, cultures, and geologic changes. These all assist greatly in reducing the abundant data to their simplest and most significant elements.

The final test of any book is its influence upon the readers who consider it with open mind. The members of the University of California have been particularly fortunate in being the first to hear the message conveyed in this interesting work, and also the first to make large use of the materials in University studies ranging through elementary classes to faculty seminars, and representing a wide variety of subjects related in one direction or another to the problem of history included in the story of early man. The influence of the lectures in their first presentation, and later that of the published volume, which reached an even larger audience than the lectures, has left no room for doubt concerning the interest in this subject presented in the form in which it has been given to us by Professor Osborn. It is well within the limits of conservatism to state that in this particular country no one of the several works in various languages available to us up to the present time has given such an impetus to the study of early human history as has been furnished by *Men of the Old Stone Age*. In the opinion of the reviewer, this field of study will generally be found one of the most attractive aspects of science and of history. We have needed only a statement of the case such as has been given us by Professor Osborn to make possible a larger and better understanding of the subject on the part of the great group of American readers and students, who have normally the deepest interest in all fundamental problems touching man and his environment.

JOHN C. MERRIAM

The Inequality of Human Races. ARTHUR DE GOBINEAU. Translated by ADRIAN COLLINS, M. A. Introduction by Dr. OSCAR LEVY, Editor of the Authorized English Version of Nietzsche's Works. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1915. Pp. 218.

At the time of its first appearance this work may have had some pretensions to the term scientific, but the rapid advancement of all branches of anthropology has deprived it today of any such claim. Its reappearance must be viewed as smacking strongly of that pestiferous reactionary propaganda to which the present war has given birth. The author's thesis is that there are three fundamental races of man—white, yellow, and black—and that all others are hybrids, resulting from mixtures between these three in varying proportions. The same three races have the relative value indicated by the order given, and the Aryan branch of the white race is above all. The great cultures among mankind have been initiated by white peoples, and when these cultures have fallen it is because the original stock has become impure through mixture